Amendments to the Specification:

Replace the paragraph beginning on page 40, line 15, with the following amended paragraph:

The reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) for SDF-I and β-actin were performed as follows: Total RNA was isolated from mice bone marrow and using TRI-Reagent (Molecular Research Center, OH) according to the manufacturer's protocol. Each RNA sample (1 μg) was subjected to cDNA synthesis in 30 μl of reaction mixture containing 1 μl Oligo dT 15 primer (500 μg/ml, Promega), 2 μl dNTP's mixture (10 mM, PCR grade, Boehringer Mannheim), 3 μl DTT (0.1 M, GibcoBRL), 1 μl RNasin (40 u/μl, Promega) and 1 μl MMLV-RT (200 u/μl, Promega) in the supplied reaction buffer (5x, 250 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.3, 375 mM KCl, 15 mM $MgCl_2$, 50 mM DTT; Promega) for 1h at 42°C. The PCR was performed in 50 μl reaction mixture using 5 μl of cDNA, Taq DNA Polymerase (Promega), 1 μl of dNTP's mixture (10 mM, BM) and specific primers for SDF-1 (sense 5' GGA CGC CAA GGT CGT CGC CGT G (SEQ ID NO:1), antisense 5' TTG CAT CTC CCA CGG ATG TCA G (SEQ ID NO:2); PCR product 335 bp). As a control for primer contamination or ~~dimmerization~~dimerization the same reaction mixture without cDNA was prepared. The levels of the house keeping gene, β-actin, were determined by the following primers (sense 5' TCC TGT GGC ATC CAT GAA ACT ACA TTC AAT TCC

(SEQ ID NO:3), antisense 5' GTG AAA ACG CAG CTC AGT AAC AGT CCG CCT AG (SEQ ID NO:4); PCR product 347 bp). The amplification was performed at 64°C for I' (35 cycles). The resulting PCR products were separated on 1.6% agarose gel (SeaKem LE agarose, FMC BioProducts).